



New England Convenience Store
A s s o c i a t i o n

CONNECTICUT CHAPTER

The Honorable Edith Prague
Co-Chair
Labor and Public Employees Committee
Room 3800, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

The Honorable Kevin Ryan
Co-Chair
Labor and Public Employees Committee
Room 3800, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

February 25, 2010

To: Labor & Public Employees Committee

RE: An Act Mandating Employers Provide Paid Sick Leave To Employees – SB 63

Dear Senator Prague and Representative Ryan,

On behalf of the Connecticut Chapter of the New England Convenience Store Association ("NECSA"), I am writing to share our concerns about the proposed sick leave legislation. NECSA represents convenience store owners and employees across the state. Our membership consists of independent store operators, franchisees and chain stores.

Our members are very concerned that the proposed sick leave act would be harmful to their businesses for a number of reasons. First, convenience stores operate with a very small profit margin. Mandating this benefit will drive the cost of business up for c-store retailers and remove the ability of convenience store owners and vendors to make a business decision as to what benefits they can offer to employees and remain competitive in the market place.

Many of our members already offer sick leave as part of their companies' policies. Others do not distinguish between sick leave, personal days and vacation days. If the state mandates this sick leave requirement, those programs will likely end because the anticipated sick leave costs will be prohibitive. Our members believe that the offering of sick leave benefits should remain a business decision.

Another consideration is that our small business members, the mom and pop stores, may not be able to provide the benefit required by this proposed law and still remain in business. In addition, in order to retain competent staff, convenience stores typically already pay higher than the current minimum wage.

Additionally, no New England state currently has this proposed mandate as law. If this proposal passes, it will also mean that additional jobs or new hires at our members' stores may be postponed or eliminated during this difficult recession.


Another consideration is that this does not adequately explain the cost to the employer, and the human resources cost to cover sick employees. With the high cost of managing a business already, this is another increase in the cost of doing business in Connecticut if passed.

Additionally, your local convenience store cannot afford business cost increases during this challenging economy. And for small employers, keeping track of accrued time is difficult. And the impact on the c-store industry in Connecticut would affect 1,468 c-stores [NACS Dec. 2009 Data, TD Linx (Neilson Reporting Service)].

Finally, last minute absences without appropriate cause or notice may require discipline and in some cases are causes for termination. NECSA members are concerned that the proposed bill does not allow for discipline in such cases or at a minimum creates more legal hurdles that are costly for Connecticut businesses to properly manage staff.

As you debate the merits of a mandated sick leave proposal, we ask that you consider the full impact of this measure on those employers who will have to pay for the costs of such an increase. NECSA members respectfully ask that you vote against this proposed mandate.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.



Diana O'Donoghue
Executive Director